THE PREMIER'S COUNCIL
ON THE STATUS OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES
Alberta

# Strategic Directions

*The Premier's Council on the Status of Persons with Disabilities (Alberta) was reappointed, with a five year mandate, in the fall of 1998. First order of business was to seek input and advice from stakeholders on priorities to be addressed.*

*This DRAFT document summarizes Council thinking on the challenges ahead. It contains:*

- *a statement of **Business Focus** - our mission, our core activities, and positioning*
- *a **Vision** or target to guide us towards 2005, Alberta's 100th Anniversary, and*
- ***Strategic Priorities** to be addressed and **Outcomes** to be pursued.*

*The content is based on what we heard from our colleagues in the disability community and government. We share this draft to confirm that we are on the right track - and to seek further guidance if any concerns arise.*

*Even as the DRAFT is revised, we are working on the priorities identified. The next draft will appear as a Business Plan that assigns and develops the necessary resources to proceed effectively.*

**Working Draft** **April, 1999**

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## Our MISSION

***To champion significant improvement in the status of Albertans with disabilities***

## *CORE ACTIVITIES*

*our mandate and core businesses*

***Policy Development***

- *based on sound research and analysis*
- *developing strategic umbrella policies regarding the status of persons with disabilities*
- *recommending, influencing and developing public sector legislation, policies, outcomes and targets that positively respond to the needs of persons with disabilities*
- *ensuring cultural sensitivity and respect for the diversity of disability issues*
- *always involved when the Provincial Government or its agencies considering policies affecting persons with disabilities - providing proactive leadership*
- *facilitating coordination of related programs and services - between Ministries & sectors (public, non-profit, corporate)*

***Advocacy***

- *informing and influencing the Premier, Provincial Ministries regional authorities and Aboriginal Governments on issues of interest and concern to all persons with disabilities*
- *pro-active public education & social marketing to increase awareness and understanding of disability issues*
- *addressing and reducing systemic barriers that impede rights and opportunities of Albertans with disabilities*

***Evaluation***

- *developing standards for and monitoring performance of the support system for Albertans with disabilities*
- *reporting progress, or lack there of, towards achievement of key outcomes related to public sector contribution to the overall goal of equal citizenship*
- *recommending systemic improvement.*

## *POSITIONING*

*The Premier's Council operates at arms length from the Provincial government. We facilitate open, effective communication between Albertans and their governments related to disability issues. We partner with both government and the disability community to improve public sector response to the visions, goals and priorities of persons with disabilities.*

*Our focus is on the overall status of Albertans with disabilities.*

# Vision 2005

*Equal Citizenship*

*Access to Opportunity*

*Full Status*

*Full Inclusion and participation in the social, economic and political life of Alberta communities*

*Increased Understanding*

*a Standard of Living and Quality of Life that promotes well-being*

*Support for Basic safety and security needs*

*the Rights, Freedoms and Responsibilities to make choices and determine own destinies*

*the Support required to reach full potentials*

*a Level Playing Field*

*The Premier's Council will be widely recognized and respected:*

- *as the CATALYST or change agent that helped make the visions of the disability community become Alberta's reality*
- *as a POWERFUL VOICE with a legislated mandate accountable to all Albertans with disabilities - in a Province where persons with disabilities are increasingly seen as the real experts capable of identifying and addressing their own needs and goals*
- *with an ongoing LEADERSHIP MANDATE in the evolution of policy, advocacy and evaluation - our role changing as goals are accomplished, communities are empowered, and self-advocacy becomes the norm*
- *for SETTING THE STANDARDS and influencing the Province of Alberta to achieve cutting edge policies, legislation, standards and behaviours related to disability issues*

*- A MODEL for other Provinces !*

THE PREMIER'S COUNCIL

# Strategic PRIORITIES and Desired OUTCOMES

***The Premier's Council is a group of dedicated volunteers supported by a small staff Secretariat. Our mission and vision statements imply many challenges, however we must focus on the critical few activities that count most if we are to deploy our resources effectively and make differences where they most matter. The following two pages summarize our strategic priorities (left column) and the outcomes we hope to deliver (right column).***

## Bridge Building

- *An effective linkage of the Council to the provincial and federal governments and to Alberta's disability organizations - in support of effective policy development, advocacy & evaluation.*
- *Developed partnerships in support of the International Year of Older Persons (1999) and the International Year of the Volunteer (2001).*
- *Strong working relationships positioning the Council to assist on aboriginal disability issues - with the Department of Indian Affairs, Aboriginal governments, regional authorities, MSB, and Alberta's aboriginal disability organizations.*
- *A partnership with the Alberta Disability Forum to effectively communicate the Premier's Council's role and to cosponsor community consultations regarding our strategic priorities.*
- *Council members active in attending the Annual Meetings (and others) of Alberta's disability organizations and making presentations designed to involve stakeholders more fully in issues being addressed by the Council.*
- *Information sessions held with senior government representatives to build awareness of the Premier's Council, its mission/vision, strategic priorities and appropriate involvement given legislated mandate.*
- *Hosting of an annual forum or event that involves government, service providers and disability organizations in exploration of current issues, solutions and coordinated responses.*
- *Hosting of informal community forums across the Province to gain direct input from Albertans with disabilities.*

## Image/Profile & Communications

- *High awareness levels - the Premier's Council is recognized by stakeholders, organizations and government representatives (provincially and federally)*
- *Representatives (of Provincial Departments and disability organizations), previously not affiliated with the Premier's Council, will welcome and value Council involvement.*
- *Council members and staff will deliver consistent messages on the role and vision of the Council, on each strategic priority and on issues that arise during their term.*
- *A Communications Plan/Strategy will be in place to guide internal and external communications - defining desired behaviour changes, key messages and communications vehicles for each stakeholder audience).*

**Regionalization**

- *Mechanisms and strategies will be in place requiring Regional Authorities include and address disability issues in their business plans.*
- *All regional authorities will have developed goals and strategies, and allocated resources, to address disability issues in their region.*
- *Regional Authorities will have taken significant steps towards ensuring that portability, accessibility and funding is available equitably to Albertans with disabilities.*
- *Each Regional Authority will have designated a liaison person regarding disability issues.*

**Provincial Business Planning**

- *Disability issues and priorities will be addressed in the business plans of every Provincial Department, Ministry and/or Agency and the Premier's Council will have had significant involvement in the development process.*
- *A mechanism (e.g. disability lens) will be in place to evaluate the impact of Provincial/Departmental policies and programs on PWD.*

**Integration - 'Big Picture' Policy**

- *Key Provincial decision-makers will understand the needs of and issues facing Albertans with disabilities.*
- *A Provincial Disability Strategy will be approved by Cabinet prior to year end 2001*
  - *coordinated by the Premier's Council*
  - *endorsing the values and principles of the disability community*
  - *providing an overall umbrella policy to guide all Provincial Departments and Agencies*
  - *and addressing specific priorities such as the need for a uniform appeal process, comprehensive disability insurance, and one-window access.*

***Of all the outputs summarized above, the following three stand out as the highest priority - simply because they are foundations for virtually all of the others:***

- ***striving towards a PROVINCIAL DISABILITY STRATEGY***
- ***development of a DISABILITY LENS - a mechanism to evaluate the impact of government policies and programs on persons with disabilities***
- ***a COMMUNICATIONS PLAN - to guide our 'bridge building' and image building activities.***

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## *the planning PROCESS*

### *ORIENTATION*

*Step 1:*

- *December, 1998*
- *review of current policies, plans and strategies that we build on the legacy of concepts and commitments*

***Step 2: STAKEHOLDER INTERVIEWS***

- *January, 1999to obtain general input on key elements of business plan (approach, mandate, priorities, etc.)*
- *involving new Council members, retiring Council members representatives of disability organizations, senior civil servants, and others*

***Step 3: PLANNING WORKSHOP***

- *April*
- *involving new Council and senior staff*
- *to determine business focus, vision, positioning statement, strategic priorities. and outcomes to be pursued*
- *working document approved by Council for distribution*

***Step 4: STAKEHOLDER REVIEW***

- *June 1st to August 31st*
- *wide distribution of draft strategic directions document*
- *meetings and presentations on an opportunity basis*
- *posting on web site*
- *encouragement of constructive criticism and comment*

***Step 5: ACTION or OPERATIONAL PLANNING***

- *September/October*
- *defining strategies and resource requirements*
- *determining how performance is to be evaluated and monitored*
- *modifying strategic elements of plan based on stakeholder input*

***Step 6: ADOPTION***

- *November 1999*
- *received by Council for information*
- *endorsed as an umbrella policy for the Council, basis for budget development and resource allocation*
- *distribution of final business plan to stakeholders.*